

Mundaka

Continuation of mantra 2.2.8...

We look for some benefit in knowledge. What would we get by knowing this *ātma-tattva*? It is said now. *Yad ānandarūpam amṛtaṁ vibhāti* : that which shines by itself is of the nature of fullness and immortal. Śaṅkara says, "One becomes free from all kinds of undesirable things, pain and stress."¹⁰⁰ By knowing the *ātma-tattva* one gets *ānanda*. One recognises *ānanda* as the *svarūpa* of *ātman*. It is not experienced bliss. It is *ānanda-svarūpa* and not *ānanda-anubhava*. Experienced happiness is in the mind. In the experience of happiness the mind assumes a particular thought mode which is called *śānta-vṛtti* or *sāttvika-vṛtti*. Any person can get this. Happiness keeps a person going. The experienced *ānanda* reveals the *ātman* as *ānanda-svarūpa* and it is oneself.

In *ānanda* there is freedom from limitations. Limitlessness is the *svarūpa* of the *ātman*, and is experienced in different degrees whenever there is *śānta-vṛtti*. One wants to be that person always. But one cannot retain that *vṛtti* forever or at least for long. It is inhibited because before the experience it was not there and after the experience also it will not be there. In fact, it is not desirable to retain it, as otherwise one will get stuck with a particular *vṛtti*. However, regardless of whether the *śānta-vṛtti* is there or not, the limitless continues to be there. It is *ātma-svarūpa*. The *śānta-vṛtti* depends for its being on the *ātma-svarūpa*, but the *ātma-svarūpa* does not depend on any *vṛtti*.

The conclusion, 'I am unhappy, inadequate and limited' is negated when the mind is quiet, and in that negation *ātman* is recognised as free from any sense of limitation. In that state there is subject-object harmony. It is a state of mind. But in the knowledge that one is *ānanda-svarūpa*, one recognises, 'all objects exist in me alone.' This is *pūrṇatva*, fullness, which is the nature of *ātman*, and hence it does not come and go.

It is *amṛta*, that which is not subject to time. By knowing it, one becomes free from the fear of death. By the negation of death there is negation of all the other *vikāras*, modifications such as *jāyate*- is born; *asti*- is alive, *vardhate*- grows; *vipariṇamate*- becomes an adult, and *apakṣīyate*- slowly declines. This is the biography of any *jīva*. Everybody is cooked by time. Who sees this *ātma-tattva*?

Dhīrāḥ paripaśyanti: thinking people see that *ātma-tattva* very clearly. *Dhīras* are the people who have *viveka* because of the teaching of the *ācārya* in keeping with the vision of the *śāstra*. Seeing is shedding ignorance through listening to the teaching. Seeing takes place in the form of a *vṛtti* that, 'all that is here is Brahman which is oneself' and that *vṛtti* removes ignorance and itself goes away. The *vṛtti* is called *akhaṇḍākāra-vṛtti*, a thought wherein there is no subject-object division. Both the subject and the object are oneself. Thereafter, that vision remains. The Kaṭhopanīṣad says, "One who has the necessary qualifications, intelligently analyses life's experiences and (desiring immortality) recognizes the inner-self by this knowledge."¹⁰¹

100 आनन्दरूपं सर्वानर्थ-दुःखायास-प्रहीणम् । (मुण्डक भाष्यम्)

101 कश्चिद्धीरः प्रत्यगात्मानम् ऐक्षद् आवृत्तचक्षुः अमृतत्वम् इच्छन् । (कठोपनिषत् २ ॥१ ॥१)

-to be continued